



(This is a PDF conversion of DogSama fanfic: Wallace and Gromit: Rewired. Written, produced and illustrated by the respective autor and W&G Rewired Team.)

Original Wattpad publication of the storyline:

[https://www.wattpad.com/story/248196704?utm\\_source=ios&utm\\_medium=link&utm\\_content=share\\_writing&wp\\_page=create\\_story\\_details&wp\\_username=dogsama&wp\\_originator=9szomij7o1lwz4clf6c1e2uf7t6ccjguubz7arzy15e6luikvltm0ocic0egt2ggjm2x3yctq3%2bdheygc8%2br3tlbpny%2bd9hd%2b5a2x%2bvddhwy5uc77kkl4fnsunwdxpyo](https://www.wattpad.com/story/248196704?utm_source=ios&utm_medium=link&utm_content=share_writing&wp_page=create_story_details&wp_username=dogsama&wp_originator=9szomij7o1lwz4clf6c1e2uf7t6ccjguubz7arzy15e6luikvltm0ocic0egt2ggjm2x3yctq3%2bdheygc8%2br3tlbpny%2bd9hd%2b5a2x%2bvddhwy5uc77kkl4fnsunwdxpyo)

Publisher and Writter of the Fanfic: <https://www.wattpad.com/user/Dogsama>

Wallace and Gromit are an intellectuall property of Aardman Animations Ltd. This is a fanfiction writted and published by DogSama and the Rewired Team, by fans for the fans of Wallace and Gromit, no charge needed, in a free realeshment. All rigths reserved.



Wallace and Gromit:

# ***REWired***

**By DogSama/Rewired Team**

Wallace invents a collar for Gromit that allows him to verbally communicate. Things heat up when a suspicious "conscience" named Buddy appears and begins to give Gromit advice. Is he to be trusted? Or does it all seem a little glitchy?



# **Part 1: Pure, Unchained, Wild Genius**

Silence filled the streets of West Wallaby Street, dark clouds hanging over the houses like a shadow. All the lights were off in every window. Every window except for one. A small upstairs window in a particularly busy household. Too busy for this hour.

Wallace sat in the dark basement of 62 West Wallaby St, the only light being the small lightbulb connected to the long wire that hung loosely to the ceiling. Wallace propped his head up in his hands, his elbows on either side of the tea-stained blueprints that were taped to his desk.

His eyes began to feel heavy as he scanned his prints for the hundredth time, scanning for mistakes. His back started to ache as he realized he was slouching over his work. He sat up, straightened his posture and picked up a nearby pencil. He sighed and held his forehead in a hand as he sketched more on the paper. It was late in the night, and he was overwhelmingly exhausted. He had to get this project done, though. It was eating the inventor from the inside out like a rotten apple. He scratched out the accidental tic-tac-toe game he'd played with himself unknowingly and stood back to admire what he'd scratched down thus far.

It was genius. Pure, unchained, wild genius. Genius that might change both his and his best friend's lives as they know it. Gromit was gonna love this, Wallace just knew it. You see, it was the beagle's birthday tomorrow. He'd realized later on that his best buddy didn't really appreciate the robotic trousers he'd bought (ex-NASA) him last year.

This time it was different. This time, he was sure, he'd done it.

He had to get this project done tonight, though, or he'd be in hot water in the morning. He was almost positive Gromit had gone to bed, as it was incredibly late. He glanced at the clock on the wall. 3:24 am. He snatched his blueprints and trotted to a corner of the basement, where different parts to old machines and such riddled an old wooden table like a scrapyard. Wallace sat down in a chair and set his blueprints down in front of him. He grabbed some pieces of metal and got straight to work. 6:34 am. It was complete. Wallace, sleep deprived and exhausted, stood back to admire his handiwork.

A collar. A thick, metal collar with a screen in the front. Different wires looped in and out of the device and connected to control panels. It had a buckle in the back, so it could be worn by none other than Gromit.

Wallace knew Gromit wasn't very fond of collars. He wasn't that kind of dog. He didn't like leashes or collars or walks or anything usually remotely dog-like. But this— this was different.

This—was a collar to translate Gromit's thoughts and feelings through verbal communication.  
A translation collar.

Wallace smiled at his genius, holding it up to the light to look for mistakes. His heart suddenly dropped into his stomach as he thought of the final flaw.

How to power such an impeccable device?

## **Part 2: Probably Selling Illegal Parts to Eccentric Inventors**

Of course, normal batteries couldn't possibly power such a mind-blowingly advanced piece of equipment. There was only one solution for this predicament.

Wallace set the collar down on the table and maneuvered around the table, running to the stairs and throwing himself up them. He was running out of time, but he was determined to get this passion project complete in time for Gromit's birthday.

Wallace tried shifting his weight around different creaky floorboards as he tip-toed down the hallway to the front door. He grabbed a coat off the rack and threw it over his back. There was only one place to go for this. Also, conveniently, the only place that would be opens this late—or—early.

Gently shutting the door behind him, Wallace began off in the direction of the antique store. Well, it wasn't really an antique store. It was more like a hobby shop/thrift store/antique store. He usually got all the parts for his wild inventions from this place. He was a regular customer here. He'd actually never gone this late to the store, though. He knew the shopkeeper would understand.

As long as he'd been going here, the shopkeeper had never told him his name. He'd always been known as the Shopkeeper. Wallace had thought about quite a few reasons the man would conceal his name. One of the reasons would probably be selling illegal parts to eccentric inventors, like himself.

Wallace stopped at the front of the store, the neon "open" sign burning through the window. He pulled open the door, a small bell going off.

He looked around the dark store, the only light being a room in the far back of the store. Wallace took careful steps into the store, looking at all the parts, contraptions, thingamajigs, whirligigs, and do-dads strewn across the multiple shelves and tables that littered the small, messy store. Old machines were hanging from the roof, threatening to fall down and crush him. The store was enough to give even the non-claustrophobics a sense of claustrophobia. A light in the back of the store suddenly flickered on, and the mysterious Shopkeeper appeared in the doorway of the furthest room.

"Why, if it isn't Mr. Wallace." The Shopkeeper wore a long black trench coat that touched the floor and wore a matching black fedora that covered his face. He was basically a walking shadow. Sometimes Wallace swore he could see a flash of blue from under the dark space in between the hat and the rim of the coat. "You're not normally here this late." Wallace could imagine the man raising an eyebrow at him. "Yes—" Wallace began. "But this is important. /Really/ important." The Shopkeeper nodded. "Go on."

"So I made this collar. A dog translation collar. But-the thing is— I need something to power it. Normal power sources are not enough. No matter how many batteries or charges or watts I put in. Nothing." Wallace sighed. "Do you have anything for me?" The Shopkeeper was quiet, and then cleared his throat. "I think I have something for you." He walked behind his counter towards the front of the store and pulled out a box. A small, sort of suitcase type box. He set it down on the counter in front of Wallace and unclipped it. It opened with a small pop and let out puffs of light blue smoke and light. Inside was a small, blue, glowing battery.

"That's it?" Wallace glared at the tiny blue capsule. "It looks like any other battery I've ever tried." The figure pulled it out with careful fingers and held it up in between the both of them. "Oh, but this one, is much different. Far superior to any other battery you've ever used. Untested power and technology, this small, but mighty blue power bank has enough energy to run multiple tv studios. All at once." The battery seemed to light up more at the words. "Wait, you said untested—" Wallace paused.

"Isn't that, a little, well, dangerous?" He asked, holding out his hands as the Storekeeper dropped the battery into his open palms. It seemed to let out a static shock as it came in contact with his skin. "Well, isn't that why you're here?" He closed the suitcase. "Aren't you desperate?" Wallace paused. "I guess-" The Shopkeeper folded his arms on the counter. "Then go. You have a collar waiting to be powered."

## **Part 3: The World's Largest Bag of Jellybeans or a Robot that Eats Crackers**

Wallace returned home, the strange battery lighting up the pocket in his trench coat. He closed the door behind him and pulled it out of his pocket, hanging the coat back on the rack. He stared at it as his legs carried him down to the basement. He just couldn't take his eyes off it.

He picked up the collar that was still laying on the table and opened the back panel. He slid the battery into place and it somehow fit perfectly. The collar buzzed to life, a bright green glow emitting from the collar's screen.

/Welcome/.

\*\*\*\*\*

The loud alarm next to his bed suddenly went off. Gromit rolled over in his tangle of blankets and threw a pillow over his head, slapping the alarm clock and turning it off. He let out a groan as he looked out from underneath his pillow at the clock. 7:00am. Time to start the day.

He sat on the edge of his bed and stretched, listening to his different joints crack. He put a paw on the back of his neck and looked around his room. He'd certainly let it get messy. He hadn't had time to do much cleaning in his own room since he'd always been so busy with Wallace. Speaking of busy— he turned to the calendar on the wall. Today was his birthday?

Gromit squinted at the calendar. Sure enough. February 12th. He sighed and stood up, wincing slightly at the cold floor beneath his paws. His birthdays had become more and more of a hassle of lately, and he knew this time wouldn't be any different. Wallace would probably get him something that would ultimately ruin his birthday and make life harder for the both of them. Deep down he knew Wallace really did care, but sometimes it seemed that Wallace didn't really and truly know Gromit.

He was sure he'd made small subtle hints to the things he'd wanted most for his birthday. Shoot, he'd practically dragged Wallace to the nearby stores and pointed out things he'd wanted.

He never actually got them though. The things he actually got seemed more like things Wallace wanted. He shook all the thoughts from his head, trying to be positive.



/Well, today may be different. /

He opened his door and headed straight for the bathroom, grabbing his towel and a toothbrush on the way out. He shut the bathroom door behind him, turning to the mirror. Sometimes he would just look at himself in the mirror. He was a short, slender mutt. Nothing special. This morning he did notice the fur on his head sticking up a bit. He raised an eyebrow and turned on the faucet, drenching his paw and slicking down the wild fur, then looking again. Much better.

After a warm shower, Gromit headed downstairs to get the tea going. Of course, Wallace was still asleep. He rolled his eyes as he filled the kettle with water and popped a few pieces of toast in the oven. He was more fond of cereal for breakfast rather than toast. He poured himself a bowl and went to do his morning routine— read the paper and eat breakfast.

As usual, nothing much graced the pages of the front cover- he never read it anyway. Something about already talking about the annual Tottington Hall vegetable competition— which wasn't until October. Nothing much ever happened around there. He turned a page and began reading down when something caught his eye.+

An advertisement. Advertisements usually never caught his attention, but this one did.

"N33d a hand? New t3chn0l0gy 2 make u c00l!"

Gromit slowly swallowed a bite as he looked at the picture underneath the magazine cut-out style text. A battery pack of some kind. How could that make you cool? He continued to read.

"P0w3r anything with this n3w batt3ry! impr3s5 y0ur fri3nd5 and y0ur n3ighb0r5 with th3 all n3wBlue-4-U!

/limited time offer only at participating locations. Untested technology! may cause pain, swelling, joint pain, death and nuclear shock please don't use this pleasepleaseple/—"

Gromit raised an eyebrow and reached for the scissors. It was best he cut this out so Wallace didn't get any funny ideas. As he crumbled up the cut out and threw it in the bin, the breakfast buzzer began to go off. Gromit set the paper down and leaned back in his chair, pulling the lever and opening the trap door. Nothing. Gromit felt his heart drop into his stomach. He instantly began thinking of the worse as he stood from his chair and walked over to look up into

Wallace's room via the doors.

"Good morning, Gromit!" The beagle was startled as he was wrapped in a hug and picked up by Wallace, who'd attacked him from behind. "Happy birthday, ol' chum!" Wallace squeezed Gromit as he began gasping for breath. "Oh, sorry." Wallace set Gromit down. "I'm just so excited for today!" Gromit snorted. Wallace probably got him the world's largest bag of jellybeans or a robot that eats crackers or something. He was still gasping for breath as Wallace led him to the living room.

"Okay, okay, okay, sit right here." Wallace pointed to a chair. Gromit sat down in the chair, watching Wallace as he sat in the one next to him. He reached for a package from behind him and set it on Gromit's lap. /At least you remembered./

Gromit felt his stomach twist into knots as he looked at the package. It was the same exact length and width of the last present he'd received from Wallace. /Not another collar... /Gromit struggled to contain a groan and an eye roll as he peeled off the terrible reused Christmas wrapping from the small gift. The wrapping eventually undid itself to reveal— a collar. Gromit looked up at Wallace, who had the biggest grin spreading across his face.

Gromit gave him a forced happy-thankful expression. "Well, lad, go ahead! Put it on!" Gromit undid the buckle in the back and slid it around his neck. A static buzz shot down his spine as a soft electrical charge seemed to blast through his body. +

"I don't see what the big deal is—" Gromit slapped his paws to his muzzle like he was covering his mouth. "Did that just come from—me?" Wallace jumped from his chair in excitement. "It works! It really works!" Wallace danced around the room, causing Gromit to let out a chuckle.

"Okay, okay," Wallace stood in front of Gromit. "Uhh, say something to me, lad!" Wallace grinned from ear to ear. "Uhh, Hi." Wallace let out squeals of excitement. "Oh, this is so cool!" He did his little hand motion, then wrapped Gromit in a tight hug. "Uhh, you're kind of suffocating me." Gromit's muffled new voice came from the collar, which was squished in between him and Wallace. "Oh, sorry, lad." They both laughed.



## **Part 4: A Little Message in a Bottle**

"So I was thinking— toast for breakfast?" Gromit asked Wallace as they headed back into the kitchen. "Of course!" Gromit grabbed the toast from the toaster and slathered it with jam. "I've already had breakfast, but I thought you might like something." Gromit brought the plate of jam-covered toast to Wallace, who had sat down at the table. He picked up a slice and took a bite out of it as Gromit sat at the other end of the table with his cup of tea. "Mmm—" Wallace dusted his fingers off. "Cracking toast, Gromit."

\*\*\*\*\*

"I'll be back in a bit!" Gromit called to Wallace as he slung a backpack over his shoulder and headed out the door.

His backpack contained different things like books, pencils, knitting needles, paper, wool, among other things he kept close. He walked down the sidewalk towards Tottington Hall. It was a good distance, but this morning he figured it would be good to get out.

The warm sun shone down on his back as he trotted along the sidewalk, the chilly February air nipping his nose. "Should have brought a coat," His collar mumbled. His thoughts could now be said out loud to the world, and it was weird. Sure, he could finally communicate to Wallace among other people, but it felt less— private. He wasn't sure. Gromit was used to feeling bottled up, like a little message in a bottle at sea, all his thoughts and feelings contained inside himself. But now, he could talk, and it was wildly wonderful.

He stopped at the main gates to the Hall, then turned and walked up the dirt and gravel road leading to the rather large and expensive mansion. Rabbits and their burrows littered the field out front that surrounded the building, and more came into view as he passed the tree line. He stopped at the front door and rose to two legs, pausing a moment before knocking.

After a few seconds the large wooden doors swung open to reveal a small white poodle, who had somehow opened the doors. "Fluffles!" Gromit let out a chuckle. Her tail started wagging as she jumped into his arms. Lady Tottington soon joined them at the door.

"Good morning, Gromit!" She smiled, her red lips parting to expose her gleaming white teeth. "Gone off without Wallace today?" Gromit nodded.

"Yeah, I—" She cut him off, "You can talk?" She looked shocked. "Oh, yeah," Gromit let go of Fluffles and showed Totty his collar. "Today's my birthday. Wallace made it for me." The collar, which had a mouth that talked in time to the voice, smiled, and matched Gromit's facial expression. "How wonderful!" She got down on a knee to further examine the elaborate contraption. "A real breakthrough in technology, that's for sure." She smiled. "Wallace is quite the inventor, isn't he?" Gromit nodded, "Oh yeah, quite the inventor." he slowly repeated.+

"So I suppose you're here to visit Fluffles." Totty led Gromit to the mansion's luxurious kitchen. The poodle had gone to live with Totty in her hall, and things had been going swimmingly. After selling Piella's house, Fluffles ultimately decided to live with Totty. Also just because Wallace and Gromit's house wasn't big enough to house another dog. They were out of room, as Wallace's old inventions and parts and destroyed pieces of equipment took up 2 of the 4 bedrooms in the house. Nonetheless, everybody was ultimately happy with the final decision, and Totty and Fluffles were both in better places. They were perfect for each other.

As they entered the kitchen, Gromit stopped to take in the scene before him. He'd seen it all before, but each time he returned, the kitchen was more mesmerizing than the last. Different machines lined the walls of the kitchen, each doing a different job. Little robots bustled around the kitchen, cooking different things, or cleaning, or baking. Hutch also lived with Totty, and had been a whirlwind of invention ever since. His borrowed skills from Wallace allowed him to basically do everything Wallace could. He was pretty much a little rabbit version of Wallace.

Hutch sat at one of the islands in the large kitchen, tightening a bolt on one of the chef robots. "There you go, little guy," Hutch turned the robot on and it jumped to the floor, feeling it's head (it must've had a screw loose) then taking off towards the breakfast department.+

"Hey, Hutch." Gromit walked over to the table, where the rabbit was seated, an array of different metal parts scattered across the table. "Did you build all this?" Gromit motioned to the robotic-driven kitchen.

The brown bunny nodded. "Sure did." He grinned a buck-tooth grin, his ears perking up. As time went on, Hutch had become smarter. His speech was now full on sentences and he was more aware of his surroundings (surprisingly unlike Wallace). "What are you doing here?" Hutch asked, setting a wrench down. "Visiting Fluffles." Gromit juttet a thumb in the direction of the poodle, who tasted a sample of cookie batter that one of the robots brought over to her to try.



She nodded, then it headed back over to the dessert table and she trotted over to Gromit. Hutch jumped down off the high chair and landed to the tile floor with a thud, walking over to Gromit and taking a look at his collar. He whistled through his teeth. "Now that's a fancy piece of equipment!" He tapped the screen with a finger. "Where'd ya get it?" Gromit chuckled. "Wallace. He made it for me." Hutch nodded, mesmerized by the glow of the screen. "Sure is pretty. Tell Wallace I said hi." Hutch reached up on the table and grabbed something, then turned to Gromit. "Give this to him as well." Hutch opened Gromit's hand and placed an object inside, then closed Gromit's hand.

"Don't lose it. It's very important." Hutch seemed serious about it. Gromit nodded. "I won't."

Fluffles suddenly grabbed Gromit by the hand and led him out into the lobby, followed by Lady Tottington. Hutch waved goodbye, then began fixing another slightly damaged kitchen robot.

"I'll be down here in the living room if you need me." Tottington called to Gromit and Fluffles as they headed upstairs. Fluffles' room was immaculate. Decorated with fancy pillows and blankets and everything else exclusive that money could buy. She deserved it, of course. She pulled over a chair for Gromit and invited him to sit down, which he did.

She brought over a newspaper and gave it to him. "What's this?" He asked. She pointed to—the same ad he saw that morning! With the newspaper clipping font and the image of a battery. She pointed at it a few times, then shook her head. She was warning him. "I had to hide that ad from Wallace this morning. I didn't want him getting any funny ideas." He paused, and lowered his voice, "You know, about buying one." Fluffles made a slicing motion across her throat and pointed at the ad again. "Got it. Make sure Wallace never finds out about the ad."

She nodded. Gromit knew Fluffles was trying to protect him, as she knew how oblivious Wallace could be to these things. "Oh! I brought this." Gromit set the paper aside and pulled the backpack off his back and put it in his lap. He unzipped it and pulled out a woolen bandana.

"For you." Fluffles seemed to grin as she held the bandana. It was knitted, obviously by Gromit, and was yellow with a sort of red flower pattern on it. Roses, she thought. "Here, let me help."

She turned around and let Gromit undo the old collar she'd had since her days with Piella and he gently tied the new one around her neck. She turned around, happily prancing around her room as she admired her beautiful new collar. Gromit laughed. "I'm glad you like it." He smiled. God, she was so pretty. He felt his heart skip a beat as she wrapped him in a hug. "You're welcome."

Totty and Fluffles waved Gromit off as he began his trip back home. It was almost dark, the sun beginning to set over the quaint little houses. As he stepped onto the sidewalk in front of the gates, he realized he'd still been holding on to the object Hutch had handed him earlier. He opened his fist. It was a small black rock of some kind, with a hole carved out in the middle. A lens was seated inside, almost like a monocle, like you were supposed to look into it. Gromit held the strange object to an eye and closed the other one, peering through. Nothing. He brought it to his nose and sniffed it. His nose wrinkled as he held it back. It smelled of sweat (most likely from his fist) and some kind of element, like silver or something. A strong, metallic scent, like when you hold a bunch of coins in your hand for too long. He shoved it in his backpack's side pocket and began the trip home.

## **Part 5: Weird, Transparent Blue Dog**

Gromit closed the front door behind him, hanging his backpack on the rack and headed upstairs.

"Is that you, Gromit?" He heard Wallace call from somewhere downstairs. "Yeah!" He called back. He ran to his room and closed the door, sliding down to the floor. It has been a long, confusing, crazy day. He totally forgot about the collar strapped around his neck. Before he could unclip it to take it off, suddenly, a stabbing pain poked at his head. "Oh, man, what the—?" Gromit put a hand to his head, but that only seemed to increase the pain. "Aah!" A shock of electricity shot up his spine, and then everything went black.

\*\*\*\*\*

"Oh, gosh—" Gromit squinted against the light in his room. It seemed brighter than usual. His head wasn't hurting as bad, but there was still a throbbing pain behind his eyes for some reason. "What happened?" He was still laying against the door.

"You passed out. Sorry about that."

Gromit was confused. "Huh?" He shook his head "Maybe I did hit my head— a little too hard— now I'm hearing voices!"

"Nope it's just me. Here, give me your hand."

Gromit put a hand out and grabbed the hand of another person. He figured it was Wallace. His vision was still a bit blurry. "Oh, thanks Wa—" Gromit let out a yelp and fell back against the door. "Who are you?!" Gromit grabbed the golf club that was next to the door, propped up against a shelf and held it out in front of him like a sword. "Woah! Calm down there, cowboy!"

The weird, transparent blue dog creature pushed the club away with a finger. "And what are you doing in my room?" Gromit raised an eyebrow. "Ok." The creature laughed, holding his hands out. "Okay, okay," Gromit pointed the club at him again. "I'm Buddy. Your personal life guide and assistant. Your conscience, your friend, your—" He grinned, his odd mustache of fur spreading as he did.

"/Buddy/."

He laughed. Gromit stood up, setting his golf club down, but still keeping it close. "Where—where did you—come—from?" Gromit could barely talk, his heart still racing from being frightened. "I come from—" He paused. "Your mind—" Buddy wiggled his fingers. Gromit slowly nodded. "Okay, and why are you just showing up?" Gromit asked, still watching Buddy. "I figured it was time you needed me." The dog folded his arms. He was very fluffy, his fur looked unkept and messy, and he somehow looked similar to Gromit. Except he was taller and— /scarier/.

A lot scarier. "And you're sure— you're not here to hurt me?" Buddy shook his head. "That's the opposite of what I'm here to do." Gromit raised an eyebrow. "I'm here to fix you. In more ways than one." He paused. "What do you mean, 'fix me'?" Gromit asked, confused on what the transparent dog was saying. "You'll see."

\*\*\*\*\*

"Ok, well, I'm going to bed." Gromit sat on the edge of his bed. He looked at his alarm clock. 10:24. Wallace was most likely in bed, so that was one less thing to worry about. "Okay. Goodnight." Buddy sat down in a corner of the room.

"Ok."

"Ok."

Gromit closed his eyes, but immediately opened them and sat up. "Can you like, not do—that, though?" He motioned to Buddy, who was watching him. "As you wish." He stood up, and walked over to Gromit. "Get some rest. We have a big day tomorrow." He smiled, then disappeared in a glitchy flash of blue and white. Then Gromit was alone. All alone in his dark, messy room.

## **Part 6: I Know You Better than You Know Yourself**

The sunlight poured into Gromit's room that early morning, burning his eyes as he tried to sleep in. There was really nothing to do that day.

He'd never felt more tired. Gromit wasn't sure what was going on, he went to bed at a reasonable time, right? He couldn't explain why he was so tired that morning.

After a few minutes, Gromit pushed himself up out of bed and sat on the edge. As he looked up, he let out a yelp as he was face to face with two yellow eyes. "Ahh!!" Gromit yelped as he fell backwards onto the floor in a tangle of blankets and sheets. "Good morning, sleepy head." Buddy looked down at Gromit from on his bed. Gromit pulled the blankets off his head.

"Don't /DO/ that!" He grabbed his chest as he caught his breath. "Sorry." Buddy laughed. Gromit glared at him as he stood up, hoping the thud from him hitting the floor wasn't enough to wake Wallace.

Gromit grabbed his towel and toothbrush and headed for the bathroom. "Uhh, privacy?" Gromit stood in the doorway of the bathroom as Buddy had followed him. The dog pushed Gromit aside. "Gotta see what we're working with." He grabbed Gromit's muzzle and looked him in the eyes, turning him around and examining him. "Beagle: Light beige-ish yellow in color with brown ears, approximately 6 years old in dog years, eye color: blue, height: 4ft 3in standing, 2ft 7in on all fours," Buddy mumbled.

"How.. How are you getting all that information just by looking at me?" Gromit watched in the mirror as Buddy straightened out his ears, then dropped them and let them flop to the sides of his head. "I have my ways. I know you better than you know yourself, Gromit." Gromit let out a loud sigh. "Can I please just get my shower now?" Buddy nodded. "Of course." Then disappeared in a flash. Gromit rolled his eyes, then felt a shock down his spine.

"Ah! Did you just shock me?" Gromit yelped as he looked around the empty room. /"Don't roll your eyes at me, mister./"

Buddy's voice in his head complained.



## Part 7: Eggs, I think

After his mental struggle with Buddy, Gromit headed downstairs.

As he reached for the tea kettle, a shock went through his arm. "Ahh!" Gromit growled. "Quit shocking me!" Buddy stood behind him. "Make coffee instead. It's cooler than tea." Gromit turned around to face Buddy. "But I don't like coffee!" He pouted. "Plus isn't tea healthier?" Buddy put his hands on his hips. "It's not about what's healthier! It's about what makes you look cooler. Now are you gonna do what I say or are you just gonna ignore me?" Gromit sighed, and reached for the coffee instead.

The breakfast bell rang, and Gromit ran to let Wallace down. "Can't he get down himself?" Buddy watched as Gromit pulled the lever. "Yeah, but, I've just always done it for him." Buddy looked at the trap door as it opened. "Pathetic." Gromit snapped around to Buddy. "Don't say that!" Buddy pointed to Wallace, who was already dressed and was looking at Gromit like he'd grown another arm.

"I'm, Uh," Gromit began, then looked at Buddy. "Can— he see you?" Buddy shook his head, then Gromit looked back at Wallace, who'd raised an eyebrow. "Are you okay, lad?" Gromit swallowed. "Yeah. Yeah, I'm okay." He smiled.

Wallace shrugged. "Okay, what's for breakfast?" Gromit looked at Buddy. "Eggs, I think," Wallace began, "Don't make him anything." Buddy said. "Let him make it. First things first. Stop devoting yourself to Wallace." Buddy flatly said. Gromit put his hands on the table. "Why don't— you-make breakfast?" Wallace gave a confused look. "Me? But I—"

He noticed Gromit giving him a look. "okay," Wallace quietly stood and took careful steps to the kitchen, looking back over his shoulder at Gromit. Buddy crossed his arms. "Wow— I- That actually— felt kinda good." Gromit turned to Buddy. "See what happens when you listen to me?

Now let's keep it up."

\*\*\*\*\*

Wallace flipped the eggs in the frying pan as his mind wandered in thought. This wasn't like Gromit. It wasn't like him at all. Telling him to make his own breakfast? It was already bad enough he didn't see his pal at all the previous night. He headed straight up to his room after being gone most of the day.

Wallace sighed, then smelled something burning. He looked down at his burnt eggs and frowned. "Great." He mumbled under his breath. He opened the nearby trashcan and slid the charred eggs into the can. He took a sip of tea, then reached for the open carton of eggs when suddenly Gromit entered the kitchen.

Wallace froze, his back turned to Gromit as he slowly cracked open the egg he'd grabbed. Should he say anything? He knew Gromit could get into one of his moods where he would completely ignore Wallace. The inventor cleared his throat.

"Gromit, are you—mad at me?" He asked, in the quietest and saddest of voices. The beagle turned around. He had started a kettle to boil water for tea on the opposite stove. He sighed. "Why would I be?" Wallace turned around, gripping the spatula in sweaty hands. "I know earlier, you told me to—" He paused. "Make breakfast yourself?" Gromit finished.

Wallace nodded, his eyes glued to the floor to avoid making eye contact with Gromit. "I—I didn't mean that. I don't know what got into me. I'm sorry." Gromit winced as a shock from Buddy jolted down his spine.

"/Don't apologize! What are you doing?" /Gromit ignored the voice in his head. "You mean it?" Wallace gave a half-smile. "Promise." Wallace turned back around, his eggs burnt again. "Well, in that case," He took the pan off the stove and showed Gromit the accidental charred eggs.

"Can you make my breakfast?"

## **Part 8: You Look Familiar**

"Are you trying to make me hurt Wallace?" Gromit slammed the door to his room after making Wallace breakfast. "No! Of course not!" Buddy insisted, sitting on Gromit's bed. "I'm just trying to help you see the things you need to stop doing." Buddy studied his long black claws, avoiding looking at Gromit. "And caring for my best friend is one of them?" Gromit put his hands on his hips. "No, not at all! Well, not completely-" Gromit let out a loud sigh. "I think I need a break."

Gromit pressed his thumb and index finger in between his eyes, obviously annoyed. Buddy shrugged. "Suit yourself."

Gromit stepped outside, inhaling the cold air. He headed down the road towards town. His stomach growled. He realized he got so busy in making sure Wallace was happy that he'd totally forgotten about himself.

Once in town, he stopped in front of his favorite diner. They had the best tea, and he figured it was best to clear his mind with a cup.

He opened the glass door, a loud bell going off. "Be right there!" a lady's voice called from the back. Gromit sat at a table and leaned back in the chair, flipping open the newspaper that was on the table. He scanned the pages for the ad he'd seen yesterday, making sure he wasn't making things up. Nothing. Did he imagine it? Was he really that tired?

"How ya doin, baby?" The waitress stopped by his table. He was the only one in the restaurant, so service should be good. "Good," Gromit replied, "Just black tea and a breakfast combo." He ordered the same thing every time he came here, which wasn't often. "Gotcha." The waitress hustled off to the back. Gromit's eyes were still glued to the paper, wondering about the sudden disappearance of the mysterious ad.



The waitress returned with a plate and cup of tea, setting it down in front of Gromit. "Say, you look familiar."

She looked at Gromit, who'd set the paper down

She looked at Gromit, who'd set the paper down. "I don't think I know—"

She squinted her eyes. "Gromit?" She asked. Gromit was taken back by this. "How did you-?" A wide smile spread across her face. "It's really you!" She excitedly jumped up and down in one spot.

"No, I think you're confused," Gromit stood up. "Aw, no, come give your aunt a hug!" Gromit was taken back as she pulled him into a tight hug. "Oh, it's been so long!" She squeezed him. "Remind me how I know you?" Gromit's muffled voice came from in between them. She let him go. "I'm your Aunt Della!" She held out a hand. Gromit raised an eyebrow at the crazy waitress before him. She was a dog, like him, but her fur was more reddish and her pink hair puffed out in all directions. He could see the resemblance.... a little.

"I know you barely know me, but I know you!" She sat down at his table. "I used to babysit you when you were little, while your mom was at work." "My mom—" Gromit began. "I've never known anything about my mother.."

Della smiled.

"Would you like to?"



## **Part 9: Slow Motion Disco**

"Your mother was a wonderful person." Della started. "She worked two part time jobs just to support you." Gromit took a sip of tea, now fully invested in Della's story. "Maisy, my sister and your mom, was pretty much in hot water after JD left, your dad and her ex-boyfriend." Gromit set the cup of tea down. "You knew my dad too?" He paused. "Wallace has never told me any of this-" He looked out of the window next to them. "Well, It's because I told him not to tell you." Gromit gave a look of disbelief. "What? Why?" She sighed. "I don't know, I guess I figured you'd never understand."

"So where is she now? My— mom?" Gromit put both elbows on the table, eagerly waiting for an answer. Della took a sudden sharp inhale. /That didn't sound good. /"Unfortunately, she passed away when you were very little.. In a work-related accident." Gromit felt his heart sink into his stomach. "That's why you live with Wallace. He adopted you soon after it happened. I would have taken you in, but at the time I was studying cosmetology abroad. I couldn't make it back in time." Gromit listened as her voice began to shake. She was obviously still heartbroken.

Gromit was trying to take in all this sudden new information. It felt so surreal to learn about his real parents. The only one he'd ever known was Wallace. "I know you're probably upset, now that I told you, but—" Gromit jumped from the table. "Upset? This is big news to me! I've asked Wallace so many times about my real parents and he's always just changed the subject or something but this- this is great!" He quickly sat down again. "Can you tell me more about my mom? What was she like?"

After hours of talking about family history and the past, Della and Gromit had formed a sudden but strong bond. "Thank you so much for telling me all this, Della. My mom was an inventor? That must be where I get it!" She smiled. "You're an inventor?" She smirked. "Well, yeah, I do a bit of it," Gromit looked around the diner, wringing his hands. "It's more of Wallace's thing, but I help every now and then." Della smiled, folding her arms on the table. "That's good to hear." She looked up at a clock on the wall. "Gosh, where did the morning go? I have to go prepare for lunch rush!" She stood and wrapped Gromit in a hug. "Come by and visit me more often, okay?"

The doorbell rang again as Gromit left the store. He felt like a completely new person with all this newfound information. For some reason, Wallace didn't feel like, well, Wallace anymore.

Now that Gromit had finally learned about his true origins, his dependence on Wallace suddenly wasn't as great. Like he wasn't needed. He didn't feel like the father figure Gromit had always looked up to anymore. Was he even necessary? Gromit shook his head. "Don't think like that!" He told himself on the walk home. "Of course you need Wallace! Well, Wallace needs you more, to be honest."

Gromit decided to stop by Tottington Hall again, to see Fluffles. She was a good listener. Whenever he had problems he couldn't tell Wallace, he always knew he could count on her to listen to him rant about different things, such as why black licorice should be banned in every country, or to just tell her things like if weights became invisible, a gym would turn into a slow motion disco, or how the spiders in Buckingham Palace are probably descendants of the spiders that lived there in Victorian times, and there's a whole parallel to the royal family but with spiders.

"I met my aunt today." Gromit sat on the chair he did last time as she lay on her bed. Her brow raised in surprise. "Yeah, my long lost aunt! She works at the diner in town. Apparently her dreams of being a cosmetologist died after my mom did—" He paused, turning to her. Her eyes were just as wide as his when he found out. "Yeah. Crazy, huh?" She nodded. "She told me everything. Everything Wallace has never told me." Gromit looked at the floor. "I suddenly don't feel as close to Wallace anymore-" Fluffles shot him a glare. "I know, it's terrible!

But.. finally finding out about my true family history makes me not really," He struggled to find the words. "I don't have a real family attachment to him. I know he raised me and all but like, I don't know, you get what I'm trying to say, right?" He turned to her. She nodded.

/Wallace needs you more than you need him. You can't just abandon him like that, after finding out the truth. How do you think other dogs are? When they're adopted by people? We don't leave them after finding out the truth. We're loyal. That's what makes us man's best friend. /

After talking a little more, Gromit felt a little better after sharing his internal conflict. "Thanks again." He smiled at her. "You always know how to help me feel better."

## **Part 10: I Knew I Wouldn't Like It**

After getting home late, Gromit headed up to his bedroom. +

"Oh my—" Gromit stopped at his bedroom door. His room was a disaster. Wallpaper was torn, a window was broken, and objects and his prized possessions had been ripped from their places and strewn across the ground. Buddy was nowhere to be seen, but he knew it was his fault.

Gromit looked at the ground, where a broken picture of him and Wallace lay shattered at his feet. Gromit took careful steps into his room, picking up objects as he went and placing them back in their rightful spots.

"So. Where ya been?" Buddy appeared in a flash of blue and white. "None of your business." Gromit picked up pieces of shattered glass from a snow globe. "It is 100% my business." Buddy crossed his arms. "Look." Gromit threw a hand at Buddy. "If you're gonna make me hurt Wallace, than I don't want you here." Gromit felt a rage begin to boil inside him. His protective instinct for Wallace began to kick in. Buddy's brow dropped, his whole expression entirely changing. Gromit thought he saw a flash of blue in the eyes of Buddy as he gave him a cold glare. "What do you mean?" He seemed to growl. "Are you dumb? I don't want you anymore if you're gonna make me hurt Wallace!" Gromit began to regret his words as Buddy walked over to him and towered over him. This "conscience" of his was terrifying. "I told you, I'm not making you hurt Wallace, I'm only here to make you better!" Right before the "better", Buddy slashed at Gromit, causing him to yelp and fall backwards in pain.

The beagle pressed a hand to his eye, whimpering as he pushed himself into a corner of the room. He took his hand off his eye, looking down to see blood covering the palm of his hand. He looked at Buddy, shocked and in disbelief that his own conscience would harm him. Buddy began to realize what he'd done, and opened his mouth, like he was about to apologize. Gromit felt tears begin to sting his eyes. "Gromit, I didn't mean—" He began. Gromit stood and ran to the bathroom, locking himself in it and sliding to the floor, burying his face in his arms.

\*\*\*\*\*+

Gromit stood in front of the mirror, a hand covering his eye. "It can't be that bad—" He removed his hand. "Ohhh, yep, it's bad!" Gromit sharply inhaled. Across his left eye, starting from his upper brow and running down to his cheek, was a scratch. A deep, terrible bloody scratch that was most likely going to turn into a terrible scar. He washed his hand off in the sink, the water turning red as it washed down the drain. He sighed as he grabbed a handful of tissue and wet it under the water, then pressed it to his eye. It hurt. Bad. He winced as he put the cold mop of disintegrating facial tissue to his skin.

After cleaning himself up, he felt another pit fill his stomach, his fur beginning to puff out as another feeling of rage fill his body. He let out a growl and ripped off his collar, a shock of electricity zapping through his arms. He threw the collar across the bathroom and slid down the bathroom door again, sitting on the floor and pulling his knees to his chest.

/Stupid collar. I knew I wouldn't like it./

## **Part 11: If You Were Cooler**

Gromit stared out of the window that night as he lay in his bed, wrapped up in blankets like caterpillar cocoon. The collar sat on his bed table, the blue glow casting a shadow on the opposite wall. His eye still hurt.

He sighed as he watched the wind blow the leaves of the trees outside. Buddy hadn't appeared anymore that night. And now everything was lonely. /He/ was lonely . Gromit sat up, reluctantly reaching over for the collar, then slowly strapped it around his neck.

Buddy appeared in a flash in the corner of the room. Gromit gave him a cold stare. He seemed more real, for some reason. He wasn't as blue and transparent as before. His colors got darker and more natural. They both stood in complete silence for a few moments. "Look," Buddy started, breaking the silence, an unusual calmness to his voice. "I'm sorry. About everything." Gromit cut him off. "No, no, I should've listened to you." Gromit lowered his voice. "I don't need Wallace. I don't need anyone." He curled up in his bed. Buddy walked over to his bedside, looking at the beagle as he lie curled up in his blankets. "Would you like me to help again?" Gromit looked at him. "Yes." He sighed, looking back out the window. "First step, like I instructed, stop caring so much for Wallace." Gromit lay completely still. "Fine." He flatly said "I will."

He looked back at Buddy. "What are you even trying to do, though?" He asked. "Why, if you're my conscience, trying to make me a better version of myself? Am I not good enough?" Buddy sighed. "There's always ways to improve. Always ways to upgrade. Yes, you are good enough, but don't you want to be better?" Gromit sat silent. "Don't you like that poodle?" Gromit suddenly turned to him. "Fluffles? You—you know about her?" Buddy nodded. "Don't you think she'd like you more if you were better? If you were, say, cooler?" He held his hands up like he was advertising a new product. "Gromit 2.0." He turned back to the beagle. "I guess," He thought. "Then from now on, you listen to me. I can get her to like you more. I can get /everybody/ to like you more." Buddy stuck his hand out for Gromit to shake. "Do we have a deal?" Gromit paused, and then looked him in the eyes. He shoved his hand into Buddy's. "Deal."



## **Part 12: What's Gotten into You?**

Gromit sat at the dining room table, a cup of coffee in his hands. He was exhausted. He wasn't even up that late the previous night, and he hadn't been doing a lot of extra work. He just felt... /drained/. Mentally and physically drained of any and all energy and just wanted to crawl back into bed. He took a sip of coffee. It was bitter, but Buddy insisted. Not only because it was apparently 'cooler' than tea, which he didn't know, but it also had more caffeine. Anything to keep him awake.

He also noticed he'd begun forming dark bags under his eyes. For absolutely no reason at all. He'd studied them this morning. He was starting to feel like a zombie, tired and sluggish and numb to everything.

The breakfast buzzer began to ring, signaling Wallace was awake and ready for breakfast. "Don't answer it." Buddy stood behind Gromit like an angry parent at a teacher conference. After a few minutes of ignoring the bell, it finally stopped, and Wallace came down the stairs in a robe. "Gromit?" He stood in the doorway. "I thought something might have happened to you," He nervously laughed as he sat at the table. The machines dressed him like normal. He noticed Gromit's cold stare. "Uh," Wallace looked behind him, than reached for his ears, worrying he may have grown rabbit ears again (he was still recovering from the were-rabbit incident). After feeling for ears and letting out a sigh of relief, he made eye contact with Gromit. He frowned as he noticed the dark bags under the beagle's eyes and his little to no movements. He then saw the healing wound that was slashed across his eye. "Lad? What happened to you?" Wallace questioned, pouring a cup of tea. "Oh, nothing," He sighed, "Just stayed up late." Wallace raised an eyebrow.

"That doesn't explain-" He traced a line through his own eye with a finger, referencing Gromit's scar. "Oh, this?" Gromit laughed. "I just—" He looked at Buddy. "You fell and landed wrong." Gromit cleared his throat. "I fell and landed wrong." He repeated. Wallace shrugged. "Okay," He blew it off. There was an awkward silence between them. "So.. breakfast?" Wallace gave an inquisitive smile. "You know what? I'm not really that hungry," Gromit gave a forced grinned and stood up. "But I am—" Wallace began. "Well, I don't care," Buddy said, smirking as he folded his arms. "I don't care." Gromit repeated, pushing his chair in. He thought he saw Wallace's feelings sink, a confused look taking over his face. "And you know what? I didn't care yesterday, either!"

Something inside Gromit told him to stop or he'd take it too far, but something else told him to keep going.

To get everything off his chest. "And honestly, I don't care about your crazy inventions either, or the fact you can't even cook eggs right, or the fact you can't do /ANYTHING/ right!"

Gromit got closer to Wallace, suddenly scaring the inventor. "Keep going! Let it all out."

Buddy encouraged. "I would be just fine without you! All you do is use me, and treat me like a dog! And I don't mean literally," He watched Wallace try and form a argument, but couldn't think of anything to say as tears began to form in his eyes. "You've never even told me about my own parents! Oh, don't act dumb and think I wouldn't find out sooner or later!" He realized he'd backed Wallace into a corner of the room. "Gromit, what's gotten into you?"

Wallace's heart was obviously broken, but Gromit didn't want to stop. He was finally able to tell him exactly how he felt, and nothing was stopping him. "You know what? I don't need you anymore." Gromit growled. "Well, I need you!" Wallace tried arguing back, "No. No, you don't." Gromit turned around. Then, something practically possessed him. Gromit quickly jolted around and dug claws into Wallace.

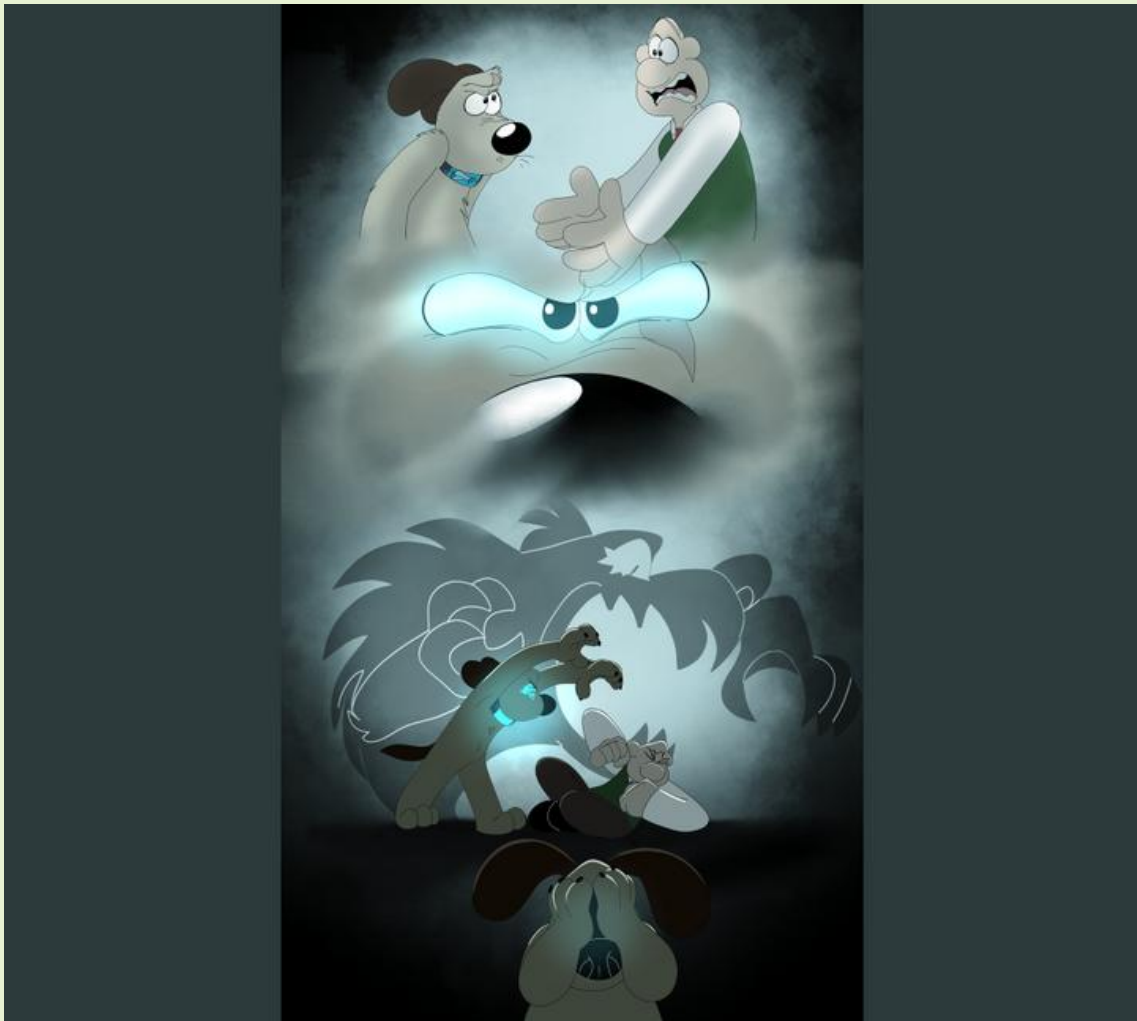


They both fell backwards, Wallace letting out a yelp as he pushed himself up into the corner, covering his cheek with a hand, just like Gromit had done when Buddy had scratched him. Gromit stood up, his chest heaving from his deep breaths. He looked down at his paws, which had black claws protruding from the ends. He didn't even know he had claws.

His eyes shifted from his claws to Wallace, who was frozen in fear, his eyes glued to Gromit. "What's gotten into you, lad?" He whispered, taking his hand off his cheek, revealing a three-clawed scratch that ran from his cheek to his lower lip. Gromit turned to where Buddy last was.

Nothing there. He looked back at Wallace, tears filling his eyes and sliding down his cheeks. Gromit slowly shook his head, then ran upstairs to his room and slammed the door.

## Part 12: That's Their Goal



"I feel better. But at the same time, I don't. Like I've done something wrong." Gromit sat on his bed, looking at his claws. "You did nothing wrong! That was great!" Buddy said. Gromit sighed. "I just don't know," He looked out of his open window. "I think go talk to Fluffles."

/You did what?! /She visually scolded him. Fluffles put her hands on her hips. Gromit sat on the chair in her room again. He'd climbed out his window and taken the backroads to Tottington Hall. He told her everything that had happened that night. "Buddy told me to-" Gromit caught himself, slapping his clawed hands over his muzzle. Uh oh. She raised a brow. /Buddy? /Gromit swallowed.

"Yeah. He's my conscience." He nervously wrung his hands. It sounded stupid now that he'd said it out loud. "He's also the one who scratched me, and," Fluffles put a hand to his snout. /He told you to hurt Wallace? "/Well, not exactly," She gave him a blank stare. /Gromit, what's gotten into you? /He let out a nervous chuckle. "That's the same thing Wallace asked me." He put a hand behind his head and avoided eye contact with her. /This "Buddy" doesn't sound good. I know my conscience wouldn't be telling me to hurt someone I love. /She looked at the floor, then pushed her hair out of her eye. She'd been keeping her fur over one of her eyes for a while now. There, across her eye, was a scar, just like his! +

"What—what happened?" She sighed. /Remember that ad? From the newspaper? It was for a insanely powerful piece of technology. I told you not to let Wallace see it. /She looked at him. /Did he see it? /Gromit shook his head. "No, why—" /I had a 'conscience' too. /Gromit looked at her.

"You— had- a dog, that looked almost like you except scarier, suddenly appear and started telling you what to do?" She nodded. "But- Gromit looked around, confused by this. "How could you?" He paused. "The battery.." He breathed in slowly. "It— must emit some kind of power that causes visions—" /These aren't just visions, Gromit! They're real, and they will try and hurt you. Mine wanted me to hurt Piella. Of course, I tried to stay loyal to her, but my 'conscience', it's not even a conscience, it's a demon, told me to hurt her. I refused and it scratched me. /She pointed to her scratch.

It all made sense now. The sudden visions, the sleep loss, the uncontrollable anger, everything. It was Buddy, using Gromit's energy to manifest and make him hurt the one he loved most. /That's their goal. To tear you and the person you love most apart. /"But how did it affect you? And how is it affecting me?" Fluffles pointed to a lamp, which was on a table in the corner of the dark room. /Piella had a lamp in our room which had one of the batteries in it. Lord knows how she got it, but it affected both of us. Initially she loved everyone she dated. It wasn't because she was overweight and revengeful that she became a murderer, that was just a cover up. In reality, it was the battery. It poisoned the air in her room and it ended up driving us mad. /She looked at the floor, obviously upset that she had to bring all this up again.

She looked at him, suddenly having an idea. /Turn around. /"What?" She grabbed his shoulder and pulled him around, examining his collar.

She found the control panel and pulled it open. /It's there! /"What's there?" /The battery! Wallace must've gotten a hold of it somehow. /She tried to pull it out. /It won't budge. /She tried removing it from the slot in the collar. It looked like it was fused in to the metal, blue strings of glitchy plasma of some kind held it in place and made it impossible to remove. Gromit tried taking the collar off. It wouldn't unlock.

"What's going on?" Gromit quickly stood, trying to pull the collar off. /Don't hurt yourself! /She stood to try and calm him. "What do I do?" Gromit looked around with wild eyes. Fluffles grabbed his hands, calming him down. /Go home, apologize to Wallace, and have him remove it. He's smart. I'm sure he'll know how. /She jumped up and gave him a kiss on the cheek, causing him to blush a little. /I believe in you. I don't want anything to happen to you, either./

## **Part 13: Getting Rid of That Collar**

Gromit raced back home, his mind only set on one thing— getting rid of that collar. He pulled on the front door. Locked. "Drat—" He remembered he'd climbed out his window. He looked up at the open window leading into his room, a rope made of tied blankets waving in the wind. He couldn't go back through his room, cause Buddy was most likely in there. Gromit slunk around the house, opening the gate to their backyard and walking around the house. A window was open. The window to the kitchen! Gromit stood on tip toes as he pushed open the window a little more, then pulled himself up. He tumbled through the open window and into the dimly lit kitchen. He quickly padded through the house, silently slinking past his room and making it to Wallace's door. A light was on underneath the door. Gromit paused a minute, putting an ear to the door. Muffled sobs came from inside the room. Gromit slowly raised a hand, then knocked on the door. He heard shuffles, then a very quiet "Come in, lad."

Gromit pushed open the door. Wallace was wrapped in blankets on his bed, a box of tissues by his side. He sniffed, wiping tears away. "Hey— hey, don't cry—" Gromit approached him. "Give me a reason not to!" Wallace raised his voice, startling Gromit a little. Wallace never /ever /yelled at him. Rarely, on some occasions. He blew his nose into a tissue. "You- you told me you didn't care about me, or my inventions, or my burnt eggs, or anything!" Wallace pulled his knees to his chest. "Hey, I didn't mean any of that-" Gromit started, "Yes, you did! That's what you said earlier, that the last time you did apologize to me that you didn't mean it!" Wallace buried his tear-stained face into his arms. "If I told you the truth, would you forgive me?" Wallace looked up at him.

"I know, I said a lot of terrible, awful, nasty things earlier. About not caring about you and that we didn't need each other." Gromit sat on the end of Wallace's bed, sitting with his legs crossed. "I take it all back. I do need you, and I should've have said I didn't. I'm a horrible friend, and I know you'll never forgive me." Gromit looked out of Wallace's window at the star covered sky. They were both silent for a minute. "But now, I need you. I need your help more than ever." Gromit turned back to Wallace, who kept a close eye on him. Gromit pointed to his collar. "What did you put in this? To make it work?" Wallace raised an eyebrow. "Your collar? A battery I got from the antique store downtown. You know, the really junky one." Gromit slowly nodded. "Was it blue? And kinda glowing and stuff?" Wallace sat up a little. "Yes," He slowly said. "That battery was actually a piece of super powerful technology that releases a toxin that causes visions and releases powerful manipulative demons," Gromit started.

"That's what happened to me. It talks to me, telling me that I don't need you and has been manipulating me. It's been trying to tear us apart..." Gromit said. He read Wallace's blank facial expression, he didn't look like he was buying it. Wallace sighed. "Gromit, lad, I know you're apologizing to me now, but what if you get mad at me again? And hurt me—again?" Wallace's voice began to shake as he talked about Gromit hurting him. Gromit looked at the scratch he'd given Wallace. "I promise it won't happen a—" Gromit was cut off as a jolt of electricity jolted down his spine. He let out a yelp as he fell to the floor, startling Wallace. "Gromit?" Wallace looked on as Gromit struggled on the floor. Wallace's door suddenly burst open, Buddy standing in the doorway.



## **Part 14: Electro-Plasma- Whatchamacallits**

"So. Here you are, doing the exact thing I told you not to do." Buddy folded his arms, shocking Gromit again. "Stop shocking me!" Gromit yelped, struggling to stand up. "Gromit, what's happening?" Gromit grabbed onto the bed, pulling himself to his feet. "Wallace—my bag downstairs— in the side pocket-" Gromit winced at another shock, "There's a tool in the pocket, like a rock-" Another shock. "I think I need it. Go get it!" Wallace nodded, running through the door, looking back at Gromit before rushing downstairs to his backpack, which was on the coatrack. He dug a hand into the pocket and felt around, his fingers grabbing around a small object.

He pulled it out, and sure enough, it was a rock of some kind, he ran up the stairs and stood in the hallway. He held it up to his eye. "Aah!" He yelped. He could see Buddy through the glass lens. He lowered it, looking in the same place. The creature was gone. He held it back up. Buddy turned and charged at Wallace. He ducked, avoiding an attack from the invisible demon dog. Wallace ran to his room and slammed the door. "Gromit! The rock with a weird lens in it! I can see it!" Gromit sat on the floor, leaned against Wallace's bed. "See what?" He seemed exhausted. Buddy was sucking his energy down to manifest, leaving Gromit with little to no energy. "That thing you were talking about!" He grabbed Gromit under his arms and pulled him to his feet. Gromit dizzily grabbed onto Wallace.

"This rock— it's- limestone!" Wallace gasped. "So?" Gromit tiredly asked. "No, you don't understand, people have told me that limestone has the ability to absorb and release electromagnetic and psychic energies-" Wallace said, "So I can see that-that thing through this lens!" Wallace chuckled. "It's genius!" He held it up to his eye. "And speaking of which, I think we need to get out of here!" There was a loud bang on the door. "You can't hide from me forever, Gromit!" Buddy growled, throwing his full weight against the door. Gromit let out another weak yelp as he was shocked again, grabbing onto Wallace to avoid falling. "Hold on, buddy!" Wallace picked up the beagle and sat him on his bed, sitting down next to him and opening the back panel of the collar. The battery was locked in by electromagnetic vines-almost-that secured it in and made it almost impossible to remove. The door burst open. Wallace looked through the limestone lens at Buddy, who blowed open the door and was towering over them.

"I'm going to improve your life, Gromit!" Buddy's growl was almost robotic in tone, "If I have to take over your body to do it!" He opened his mouth over them, like he was about to take a bite out of them like a ham sandwich, plasma drool dripping out of his gaping mouth filled with razor sharp teeth.

Suddenly, in a flash, there was a loud jolt of electricity and a buzz, like the sound a power line makes when it hits a tree.



Suddenly, in a flash, there was a loud jolt of electricity and a buzz, like the sound a power line makes when it hits a tree. Buddy collapsed to the floor, grabbing his chest. "What did— what did you do to me?" He growled at Wallace. He held up the battery in between his fingers. Buddy yelped, seeing Wallace had successfully removed the battery. He got up and tried to run and attack Gromit, but suddenly exploded in a glitchy flash and evaporated before he could.

Wallace smirked, feeling a sense of pride. "See? I can do something," He pulled Gromit close into a half hug. "How did you-" Gromit held his head in a hand as he looked at the battery in Wallace's hand. "Cut it out." He smiled. Gromit raised an eyebrow. "With this." Wallace held the limestone up. "It cut through those electro-plasma-whatchamacallits and I pulled the battery out." Wallace smiled. "You—you saved me." Gromit turned to him. "After all I said and did to you, why would you save me?" Gromit looked at Wallace. "Why would I save /us/?" Wallace corrected. "I don't know what I'd do if I lost my best friend to a battery powered demon dog." He laughed.

## **Part 15: I Can Always Tell When You Lie**

Gromit set a plate of toast and eggs in front of Wallace. "Oh, thanks lad," Wallace picked up a fork and stabbed at an egg. "No problem." Gromit sat down at a chair closer to Wallace and took a sip of tea. He smiled as the warm liquid ran down his throat and then opened the paper that was on the table. "Well, what do you know." Gromit read the front page. Wallace turned to him. "New Ingenious Battery Banned from Britain Within 2 Weeks." He read the headline. "Try saying that 10 times fast." Gromit laughed, continuing to read the article. "They just now got around to it?" Wallace took a bite out of toast. "You think they would've found out how bad it was sooner." Gromit rolled his eyes. "Yeah." He straightened his newly reinvented collar. Wallace had fixed it to where it was solar-powered. Sans demon dog. The same product but with less headache. Why didn't he think of that sooner?

"Are you feeling any better?" Wallace asked, talking about Gromit's energy drainage and his scar. "Better." He said. "It was easier to sleep last night knowing that I wasn't being watched by a terrifying powerful creature that looks like me." Gromit sipped on his tea. "That should've been a red flag right there, lad." Wallace laughed as Gromit playfully punched him in the arm. "No way you would've ever found out!" Wallace smirked. "I bet I would've." Gromit laughed. "Okay, okay."

After breakfast, Gromit took Wallace to the diner in town, to meet his aunt Della.

She put her hands on her hips. "Is that Wallace?" She laughed, walking over and wrapping him in a hug. "I haven't seen you in years. You should've brought Gromit down to see me sooner." She said. Wallace shrugged. "I know, I should've. It's my fault." Gromit smirked. "Don't worry about it." He patted Wallace on the back. "At least I found out at all, right?" Wallace nodded. "I guess." He smiled.

After another visit with Della, they headed back home and Fluffles came over to check on Gromit. Wallace had invented a solar-powered translation collar for her too, and gave it to her as soon as she came over. "You didn't end up hurting Wallace too bad, did you?" She asked. She and Gromit didn't need collars to talk to each other, but Wallace liked being able to talk to her. "Not really." He kinda lied. She raised an eyebrow. "Don't lie to me, Gromit." She giggled. "I can always tell when you lie. Your ears fall down a bit when you lie." Gromit grabbed his ears and pulled them down. "I'm not lying!" He started blushing out of frustration. "Yes you are!" She laughed.

"Okay, maybe a little," He let his ears go and they popped back up. "I saw the scratch on his cheek when I got here." Gromit nodded. "Yeah. I did that on accident." He shrugged. "At least it's over." He sighed. "Your room is a mess." Fluffles looked around his room. It was still pretty much left the way Buddy destroyed it. He hadn't had time to fix it up. Fluffles stood and bent down, grabbing the broken picture of Wallace and Gromit. "Might wanna fix this." She handed it to him. "If you want, we can go and get it reframed later." She shrugged. "Just the two of us." Gromit smiled. "That sounds like a wonderful idea."

\*\*\*\*\*



*The End...*